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Book Review: American Family Law, Volume 2, by Chester G. Vernier

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BOOK REVIEWS

American Family Law, Volume 2. By Chester G. Vernier, Professor of Law, Stanford University. Published by Stanford University Press. (\$5.00).

Some months ago we had the pleasure of reviewing Vol. 1 of this series called *American Family Laws*. Volume 2 has just come to hand. This volume deals with divorce and separation. The plan of preparation is the same as Volume 1 and the book shows the same painstaking care and monumental amount of research. Being based largely upon statutory law the book of course runs the risk which we pointed out in connection with the review of the first volume; that is, of becoming at once subjected to the perils of statutory changes in the various states.

This volume presents to the reviewer the most concrete proof of the necessity of some method of uniformity in divorce legislation which has yet come to the attention of the reviewer. Some amendments to the Federal Constitution have not been popular. However, there is a feeling that there should be a national divorce uniformity the same as national bankruptcy uniformity. Since that can only be brought about by an amendment to the Federal Constitution those of us who favor that uniformity are compelled to advocate the amendment. Those of us who have sat in the meetings of the uniform law commissioners know how hard it is to accomplish any uniformity in that body, on this subject. A mere glance at this book and the manner in which it is prepared showing the diversity in the various states is certainly sufficient to prove the wide divergence in the various states which ipso facto establishes the need of the uniformity.

We have subjected this book to some tests and we have not found it wanting in any respect. As test media we have used peculiarities of the Wisconsin law and peculiarities of the laws of some other states which were known to us, and we find the arrangement completely reflects these tests. The same system of references and notes are used which were used in the first volume, and so far as we have been able to find this is the most complete compilation of law review articles on the subject.

CLIFTON WILLIAMS

Cases and Materials on the Law of Landlord and Tenant. By Albert C. Jacobs, Associate Professor of Law, Columbia University. Published by West Publishing Company. (903 pages).

This is not only a new subject for the law school curriculum but is also another step in the development of the case method of instruction back to the systems of instruction in vogue before Professor Langdell was appointed dean of Harvard University Law School. The "questions" appended to many of the cases in the text and quite frequently even to the "digested cases" are reminiscent of the old quiz method of teaching and learning the law. The "digested cases" bring the book much closer to a digest textbook than any casebook which the writer has seen accomplishes by copious notes. Of course this method of treating cases has its advantages. Unduly long opinions (which are read if read at all with reluctance by students and even instructors when published in full)